

Approved 3/16/22
TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
Howes House Study Committee
Jointly with the Historic District Committee (HDC)
February 17, 2021 8:30 am
Virtual meeting

Present: Skipper Manter Jen Rand, James Klingensmith, Bethany Hammond, Kathy Logue, John Keenan, Antonia Kenny, Jerry Thiboudot, Sean Conley, Annie Fisher, Josh Gothard, Charlie Kernick, Nancy Dole

Kathy walked the HDC through the project to date. The committee then looked at sketches of the elevations and interior design as explained by John Keenan. Annie said the project looked really large from State Road. The tower has no windows (by necessity) but makes it look even larger. On the South side she said there is a large expanse of glass, which serves no purpose other than to let light into the stairwell, the interior of the building will not benefit. She said the tower should be set back from the road and the middle section of the building is too long.

Josh said the building turns its back to the main road. He said he understands that is to assist the functionality for the clients but it doesn't work for the center of town. He said the stairwell will cause light pollution because of all the windows.

John K. said the lights will be on a motion sensor, he noted the utility lines for the Library interfere with the options on the site.

Josh asked if the elevator had to have a mechanical room and if the whole thing could be moved to the back of the building. John K said the code required an elevator of this size.

Josh said the front door should be usable. Jen noted it isn't used now. Sean agreed about the door not being functional now, but said the building should look less "fortress-like" in the final design.

Josh said it would be nice if the building looked like Alley's, with the front porch where people can gather. Jen asked if that meant the HDC would allow the building to be torn down and designed from the ground up to be reflective of the town center and the most efficient design for use inside. Kathy followed with asking what time period are we trying to maintain noting the building has changed a few times over the years. Sean said the HDC doesn't have to preserve everything in stone, He said the operational needs are so extensive it might make sense to start over. Josh said a blank canvas in the easy way out and the town wouldn't get the historic feel back. He said the town should restore the building to the way it originally looked and put the addition on the back where it can't be seen. Kathy L noted this could bring the budget up to at least \$6 million.

Josh asked if the Council on Aging had to be at this location. Jen said the town doesn't own any other property. Bethany pointed out the clients really value the ability to go to the library and Alley's as well while they are visiting the center.

Charlie K. said the current design felt too big, he would support a new building on the site. Annie said it was hard to think about taking it down. Josh said you can't tear down an old building just because it doesn't suit your needs. The HDC said the mass is too large facing State Road.

Respectfully Submitted by Jennifer Rand, Town Administrator